

CLARA ADMITS KILLING HAMON

Tragedy Followed Drunken
Spree in Which She Was
Brutally Attacked.

(Continued from First Page.)

every one would believe my story. Will they believe now that my bruises are almost healed?"

She flung from her head the black mantilla, affected as a scarf by Mexican women. She held her face back, so that the half circle of moonlight brought into sharp relief her features. Her fingers traced the black circles under her eyes. She spread out her hands so that the bluish torn markings still could be seen.

Her brother, James Smith, was with me. It was the first close view of his sister he had had since the Ardmore tragedy. He stepped forward, stared into the upturned face and gasped:

"My God, Clara, you're an old woman, an old woman and you're only twenty-seven."

HOW CLARA WAS FOUND.
But the strange way of my meeting with her and of what she told me and why she told me, can best be given in the sequence of development. Here, then, is the way the story unfolded as I worked upon it.

From the day after Jake Hamon was shot in the room of the Ardmore Hotel, it was evident that the girl intended to make a complete flight from the State. All clues pointed to Mexico. And into Mexico the way seemed to lie through El Paso—for here lived her parents and her brother, James.

I believed the parents and James, who is nineteen years now, knew exactly whether the girl had fled. In this I was mistaken. But—and here enters an almost unbelievable element—she had fled blindly into Mexico across the El Paso border, and as blindly as though directed by fate, she had fallen into the kindly ministering hands of half a dozen of the highest officials of the state of Chihuahua.

HELPED HER ON WAY.
These men, actuated, as they told me yesterday, by an inspiration from without, their own understanding, wrapped about her head the mantilla of Mexican women, put her on a southbound train from Juarez, literally stood guard over her, carried her from the train at Chihuahua City, established her in a quiet and elegantly appointed hacienda—and taught her the rudiments of spiritism.

I believed, as I have said, the brother and father knew where the girl was in hiding. They had assured me they wished to get word to her that she ought to return. It was at the brother's own request that he and I followed a clue which led us into the capital city of Chihuahua.

We found nothing the first day. The second day it became evident to us both that we were being shadowed.

THE beautiful Countess of Wilton, whose husband, the youthful Earl of Wilton, has been cited in an action which Col. Alexander Ross-Hulme, of Dundee, Scotland, is bringing against his wife, according to a report from London.



The third day the brother was visited by a Mexican of elegant bearing, but with little English knowledge. He asked James Smith to furnish him a photo. It was given. The messenger departed.

ASKS TO BE LET ALONE.

The next morning I received a letter. Another messenger brought it. He, too, was of cultured bearing, but not loquacious. The letter was written in the hand of Clara Smith Hamon. It would be gratuitous to quote it. In effect, she wrote she knew that I and her brother were in the city. She wrote that she wished to thank the Chicago Herald and Examiner for seizing the opportunity to help her before the world by publishing the story she had left in her trunk.

"But go back, please," she said, "and tell your readers that I will not give myself up now. Ask that the search for me be not pressed at present; I have my reasons for wishing to wait unmolested here."

Once again, another mysterious Mexican called upon me, bowed, said nothing, but was willing to depart with a note I had written in answer to that the hunted woman had sent. That was yesterday morning. In the afternoon came a telephone call. "We know everything about you," was the information. "Come to me in front of the state palace."

EMINENT MEN APPEAR.

There I had not long to wait. Two men approached me. I had learned to know them already, just as one learns to know the President of his country by seeing published pictures. These were two of the most influential and wealthiest of all Mexico. They are of the Spiritualist clan that chose to receive and protect Clara Hamon.

"Tonight," they said, "we will take you to her. We have consulted her, and consulted knowledge beyond that she possesses. You are—what you call it—on the square. Wait in your hotel."

Then they showed me something that might under other circumstances and at other times have suggested an element of comedy. They displayed a sheet typewritten in imperfect English, purporting to be the trance revelations of a medium.

I pledged my word that I would not divulge the contents of the "message."

TAKEN INTO A PARK.

The meeting with Clara Smith Hamon came almost on the minute scheduled. The moon was full in the heavens when her brother and I were met at our hotel by an envoy. He spoke no English. He merely gestured to us from the establishment into the street and thence into a rickety, two-seated buggy.

Thus we reached the park and were guided to a splotch of shadow where a woman and a man were whispering.

James, the brother and the fugitive girl rushed into each other's arms. Then, with the brother and two Mexican friends in our wake, Clara Hamon and I set off slowly through the park.

At first she was reserved. "She felt that she should not return to the States just now," she said. But, later—later, she would go back and prove her innocence. There were things she should make sure of first—things and men.

METEOR AS INSPIRATION.

Perhaps the collapse of her determination to delay her surrender was merely due in point of time. It may have been that the meteor which burst against the dark skyline of the trees was the inspiration. A hand-organ, from some place half a block away, was groaning a medley of time-worn Spanish airs.

"No," she was saying, "not yet, but—look! look quickly!"

The trail of the shooting star was vivid still when I glanced over my shoulder. It burst with something of a report, and as this visitor from space broke, so coincidentally broke the will of the woman beside me.

Oh! I can't any longer keep it back!" she cried. "The strain is killing me. I want to tell everything. I want you to take back and publish, for all the world, the real story of Clara Smith and Jake Hamon."

"For ten years—you know, we had been—he had dominated me. I hated

him and yet I loved him. That day, of November 21, we were to part for good.

"It was my decision and his. His wife was returning to him from Chicago. He had grown to be a power in money and politics. I had made him what he was, but I had no desire to remain with him and share in the glory. As for him, he was about to step out of the rough character, become a home-hiding husband, something of a power in his church, and, consequently, better able to grasp the higher political opportunities that both he and I knew lay just ahead.

"And I—for ten years, I had been fighting that soul-racking battle to free myself from him—to be just good as other girls are—as every girl wishes to be.

"For the sake of my father and mother—and for the sake of Jimmie, here."

FOR HER BROTHER'S SAKE.
She reached out an arm suddenly and drew to her the brother—typically a college boy of clean-cut features and eyes that pretended a sophistication which not yet had time to ripen.

"O, it was for Jimmie's sake that I wanted to leave Jake Hamon forever. I wanted him to be able to go through college with head up—never knowing nor suspecting that his sister was not—was not—"

She sobbed outright for the first time, then drew more tightly about her face the black scarf and went on.

"And so, you see, that day was to have been our last together. We had made up our minds. It was—hard."

"We had promised each other that not a thing should happen to mar the sanctity of the time. It was sacred for me, because he was the only man in all my life."

"It had to be sacred for him, too, for he loved me. He was a man who sought after every woman he encountered, but he loved just me. Often he had told me—it had become a pet expression with him: 'Clara, I love you better than all the world; I love you better than my children.'"

WENT TO SEE POLITICIANS.
"And so, that morning we were sad, but each was trying to conceal the sadness so as to give the other a one last happy memory."

"There were politicians in Ardmore whom he had to meet. That angered him at the start, for he wished the day along with me. He saw them, I knew he met them in the sort of mood which made him an easy victim for the madness which later came."

"The day passed. Instead of our being together as we had desired, he was forced to run constantly to his office. Each time he came back to me he had more drink than before."

"Always in the past he had been able to achieve what you men call 'carrying' his liquor. But as this day wore on and I got still glimpses of him, I became convinced that he was going crazy. Crazy is the word. The way his eyes were glowing, his lips twitching, his fingers clenching."

TELLS OF SCENE ON PORCH.
"Until that day he invariably masked himself in public as a gracious man. There were those who always thought of him as a 'good sport.' But toward evening he forgot to pretend in public to be what he was not behind the door of our room."

"I met him on the veranda of the hotel at close to 6 o'clock. He screamed at me—jerked me down into my arms. I begged him to take me to the room. If he was bent on a quarrel, I wanted to save him and me from the ignominy of a public fight. He made me keep my seat until he left his own and lurched across the street once more to his office."

"After he had gone back again to his office, I felt strangely worn and old. So this, I thought, was to be the ending of our last day. I would to God, now, that it had ended as I believed at the moment it was finishing."

UNREFRESHED BY RIDE.

"My automobile was waiting out in front. I decided to drive alone and seek what refreshment the evening air would give. In possibly half an hour I returned. I was heart-sick. I felt no better."

"The last day, the last day," kept ringing in my ears.

"But how I hated him for the scene he had made on the hotel porch. How I hated myself because I had yielded to his dominance for so long."

"I went to my room—number 28. His room was number 29. I locked the communicating door between. I locked my own door. I could hear him beyond the partition. He evidently was more angry even than before."

"I telephoned for some food. The negro porter—Bill—and he will verify what I say, Bill will—came with food. At his heels rushed Mr. Hamon. I could not put him out."

"I got rid of the porter."

"Mr. Hamon hung himself down upon my bed. He was disgustingly

intoxicated, he called me—he called me a terrible name.

"His knife—Mr. Hamon's knife—fell out of his pocket as he lay the bed," the story took up. "I don't know why—it must have been Providence—I picked it up and concealed it on the table under a newspaper. He got up from the bed. He grabbed me. His fingers went deep into my throat, I couldn't scream."

"He laughed that harsh, snarling laugh of his. He grabbed my hand and broke my fingers. He crushed them backwards on the knuckles."

"Then he had another thought. Instead of breaking my fingers he would test his strength by twisting the flesh of my hands in a circular fashion until the flesh should break. He proposed to strip my hands of skin."

"How, I don't know, but there came an instant when I succeeded in jerking loose my tortured hands. They were bleeding from every pore. They were torn."

"He felt for his knife—the knife I had picked up and hidden under the paper. He started to lunge toward me across the floor. On the window sill I felt my handbag. It was open. Inside my hands searched and found my gun. He had given me this gun himself."

"I leveled this gun at his head. I cried out for him to stop. I held the pistol toward him. There was a chair close to his left hand. He lifted his right one suddenly and switched on the light. The chair was swung over his head. He struck down savagely upon me."

"As the chair came down the gun went off. It's true I held it in my hand and had it pointed at him. But I swear to God I didn't pull that trigger. The shot sobered him instantly."

"Clara, you've hit me, you've hit me," he sort of half-way moaned. "Well, I turned on the light," she said. "He was bleeding, but it didn't seem to be so serious then. I helped him onto the bed."

"I'll run for a doctor," I told him. "No," he answered, "it would not be wise I'll walk to the hospital. I can make it and I'll say I did it myself."

"I should never have allowed him to do it. I watched him as he staggered out of my door. That was the last I ever saw him walk."

NEWS OF ALEXANDRIA AND NEARBY VIRGINIA

Congressman Uphaw Speaks To Young Men Sunday.

ALEXANDRIA, Va., Dec. 20.—The regular Sunday afternoon meeting for men was held at Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church yesterday afternoon under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association. The speaker was Congressman William D. Uphaw of Georgia, who took for his subject, "Four Cornerstones for Manhood." The meeting was largely attended.

Mrs. Rebecca Barrett died at the home of her son, William T. Cox, 928 Franklin street, yesterday. Mrs. Barrett was sixty-eight years old and was the widow of R. J. Barrett.

In the corporation court, Judge Robinson Moncre presiding, a limited divorce has been granted Mrs. Esther O. Bass from Samuel Bass.

The funeral of Mrs. Mary Daniels will take place from Demain's Chapel tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock. Mrs. Daniels was the wife of Henry L. Daniel, of Fairfax.

Alexandria Council, No. 5, Order of Fraternal Americans, has elected these officers: Past president, Samuel T. Parks; president, James T. Pullman; vice president, James T. Humphrey; recording secretary, James R. Mansfield; assistant recording secretary, Fred W. Ebbardt; treasurer, O. H. Daniels; chaplain, James H. Mansfield; marshal, Frank B. Williams; warden, James L. Lloyd; inside guard, William A. Campbell; outside guard, Benjamin F. Skinner; trustee, for three years, George W. Pettit; representative to Grand Lodge, Lewis DeVaughan; alternate, Thomas Simpson; degree master, Fred W. Ebbardt.

A meeting of Alexandria Lodge, No. 758, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will be held at their hall this evening. The degree of the order will be exemplified on a class of candidates, following which there will be a social session.

The League of Women Voters will hold a meeting on December 27. Addresses will be delivered by Commissioner of Revenue Charles H. Callahan and by City Health Officer Louis E. Foulke.

The funeral of the late Mrs. Lucinda Oliver was held from Wheatley's Chapel this afternoon. The funeral services were conducted by the Rev. S. A. Wallis.

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